

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L QUITO 8414

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MILI PFOR EC

SUBJECT: MEETING WITH PRESIDENT RODRIGUEZ LARA: 2 - OUR MILITARY
RELATIONSHIPS

REF: QUITO 8413 (NOTAL)

1. IN A MEETING WITH PRESIDENT RODRIGUEZ LARA ON DECEMBER 10, HE BROUGHT UP THE SUBJECT OF OUR MILITARY RELATIONSHIPS. HE EXPRESSED GENERAL SATISFACTION WITH THE PROGRESS WHICH HAD BEEN MADE IN THIS FIELD SINCE THE LIFTING OF FMS SANCTIONS IN JANUARY, 1974. HE TOLD ME THAT ECUADOR WISHED ONLY TO REPLACE ITS EXISTING EQUIPMENT, IT WAS INTERESTED ONLY IN DEFENDING ITS TERRITORY AND ITS NATURAL RESOURCES AND HAD NO AGGRESSIVE INTENTIONS. SOME OF ITS EQUIPMENT TYPES, HE COMMENTED WRYLY, WERE FEATURED IN U.S. MILITARY MUSEUMS--LIGHT TANKS, FOR INSTANCE. HE THEN REVIEWED THE SITUATION AS HE SAW IT IN EACH OF THE THREE SERVICES.

2. WITH RESPECT TO THE ARMY, THE PRESIDENT SAID OUR PENDING LETTERS OF OFFER HAD TOO LONG DELIVERY TIMES (HE MENTIONED TWO YEARS, ONE OF THE SHORTEST DELIVERY TIMES WE HAVE CITED). HE SAID THAT AS A RESULT ECUADOR WOULD UNFORTUNATELY HAVE TO MAKE PURCHASES ELSEWHERE. HE SAID THAT SUCH PUR-
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CHASES "MADE NO SENSE", BUT THAT GIVEN ITS NEEDS ECUADOR

FELT IT HAD NO OTHER ALTERNATIVE. I ACKNOWLEDGED THE DIFFICULTY IN PROVIDING EQUIPMENT WITHIN THE TIME FRAME DESIRED BY THE ECUADOREAN ARMY AND CITED BOTH PRODUCTION DIFFICULTIES AND TRANSFERS TO ISRAEL AS BEING LARGELY CAUSATIVE. IN THIS CONNECTION, THE PRESIDENT SPECIFICALLY THANKED ME FOR THE EXPEDITIOUS ACTION TAKEN AT THE INSTANCE OF SECRETARY OF THE ARMY CALLAWAY ON THE DELIVERY OF THE FIFTEEN D-7 TRACTORS. (SEE FOLLOWING SEPTEL.)

3. RODRIGUEZ TURNED THEN TO THE QUESTION OF SHIPS FOR THE ECUADOREAN NAVY AND INDICATED THAT HE DID NOT THINK THINGS WERE PROGRESSING ESPECIALLY WELL. I TOLD THE PRESIDENT THAT WE EXPECTED TO BE ABLE TO INFORM THE ECUADOREAN NAVY WITHIN THE NEXT FEW WEEKS OF THE NAME OF THE DESTROYER WE PROPOSED TO MAKE AVAILABLE AND SAID WE HAD JUST AGREED ON THE SALE OF AN LST. HE KNEW THIS. WITH RESPECT TO THE SECOND DESTROYER WHICH HAD BEEN REQUESTED, I SAID THAT OUR FLEET WAS AT ITS LOWEST LEVEL IN MANY YEARS AND THAT THE AVAILABILITY OF AN ADDITIONAL DESTROYER DEPENDED ON A LATER REVIEW OF OUR PRIORITIES AND ON CONGRESSIONAL ACTION WITH RESPECT TO NEW CONSTRUCTION.

4. WITH RESPECT TO THE AIR FORCE, THE PRESIDENT EXPRESSED HIS SATISFACTION WITH THE WAY THINGS WERE GOING. I AGREED, AND SAID WE HAD RECENTLY AGREED TO SELL A-37B'S BUT ECUADOR HAD NOT ACCEPTED OUR OFFER OF F-5F'S AND I UNDERSTOOD THAT THE GOE WAS MAKING PURCHASES ELSEWHERE. THE PRESIDENT NODDED AFFIRMATIVELY AND PROMPTLY ASKED ME ABOUT THE AVAILABILITY OF THE F-4 PHANTOM. I CONFIRMED THAT WE HAD NOT AUTHORIZED THE SALE OF THIS PLANE IN THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE.

5. COMMENT. THE PRESIDENT WAS COMPLETELY AND ACCURATELY INFORMED ON THE STATUS OF OUR RENEWED MILITARY RELATIONSHIP.
BREWSTER

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